

## ***General Plan Amendment Process***

The City of Tempe maintains a policy of periodic review of the General Plan. This periodic review process allows for reasonable changes, referred to as amendments to the General Plan based on public input, Board and Commission recommendations, as well as economic and environmental conditions. This process is also essential in keeping any adopted General Plan viable and assures that the Plan is in concert with planning and development policies of the Mayor and city Council. The General Plan amendment process defines a course of action for both public and private interests. An amendment is made through an established process beginning with a formal request to make a change or amendment to the adopted General Plan.

### ***Determination of major amendment***

Pursuant to Arizona legislation, a major amendment is a substantial alteration of the municipality's land use mixture or balance as established in the municipality's existing general plan land use element. For major amendments, State legislation also requires that the plan must have two or more public hearings before the Planning and Zoning Commission and city Council, and must be adopted by two-thirds of the city Council. It is the responsibility of the Development Services Manager to determine if a proposed change is significant enough to require a General Plan major amendment and process. A proposed plan or project would require a major amendment to the General Plan if any one of the following apply:

- A Specific Plan which decreases any land use category within the specified area by one percent
- The plan or project results in significant alteration to or deviation from the *Water Master Plan*
- The plan or project results in significant alteration to or deviation from the *Comprehensive Transportation Plan*
- The plan or project DECREASES the acreage of any projected land use at the time of application by the following criteria:
  - Residential land use by one percent
  - Open Space land use by one percent
  - Any other land use category by two percent(For the acreage resulting in a major amendment, see the land use element of projected land uses, *Table 2* on page 68, which is subject to update. Calculation will be made with the most updated data at the time of application.)

The complexity of the proposed amendment and/or attendant issues will determine the extent and nature of support material needed for the amendment. The Development Services Manager will also make this determination.

### ***Criteria for considering any amendment to the General Plan:***

1. Written justification for the amendment should consider long-term and short-term public benefit and how the amendment, considering Land Use Principles, will help the City attain applicable objectives of the General Plan.
2. If the proposed amendment is only to the General Plan's text, there should be objective discussion of the amendment's long-term and short-term public benefit and the larger issue of its impact on the city attaining applicable objectives of the General Plan.
3. If the proposed amendment impacts the General Plan's Projected Land Use Map only, there should be objective discussion of the amendment's impact on the projected land use within a minimum of a half-mile of the property.
4. With a proposed amendment to the General Plan Projected Land Use Map, the applicant/developer's written discussion on the proposed amendment should respond to the Land Use Principles in the Land Use Element of the General Plan. The principles are presented on the next page, in a generalized request/response format.

- a. Describe the public benefit of the proposed amendment in terms of increase/decrease in intensity and its impact on adjacent land uses versus the impact of the present land use designation.
  - b. Describe the public benefit of the proposed amendment in terms of impact on the city's infrastructure (i.e. water, sewer, utilities, streets, in terms of anticipated traffic generation, projected carrying capacity, projected volume, need for more streets, city services, etc.) versus the impact of the present land use designation.
  - c. Describe the proposed development quality of life in terms of how its components reflect unique site design, building design, landscaping; integrate or provide access between varied uses; deal creatively with the automobile; and reduce/eliminate physical barriers, as well as provide residential, employment and shopping opportunities.
  - d. Describe the use of open space, parks or green belts, and how the development separates as well as links residential and nonresidential component(s), if the proposed development incorporates a residential component. If applicable, describe how the proposed development impacts existing parks.
  - e. Describe the proposed development in terms of supporting regional and local transit objectives for arterial streets; implementing the goals and objectives of the *Tempe Transit Plan*; describe the internal street system in terms of supporting the above goals and objectives and incorporating uniquely designed transit facilities along the arterial streets.
  - f. Describe the proposed amendment in terms of effects on the school districts (enrollments and facilities).
5. If there are concerns, consideration of the proposed amendment shall be granted only if potentially negative influences are mitigated and deemed acceptable by the city Council.

***Any amendment must follow the following process:***

1. The Development Services Manager, the Public Works Manager and the city Council subcommittee review a proposed amendment.
2. With the submission of a formal application, the Development Services Director will prepare a staff report on the proposed amendment, with a recommendation and support material for consideration by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
3. The Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a minimum of two public hearings on a proposed major amendment or a minimum of one public hearing on a minor amendment and forward a recommendation to the city Council.
4. The city Council, with the recommendation of the Planning and Zoning Commission and attendant support material, will hold a public hearing on the proposed amendment. The material will include a Resolution to adopt the amendment to the General Plan.
5. If the city Council approves the proposed amendment, the Resolution is the formal acknowledgment of the Council amending the General Plan.

***Note that the specific legal requirements for hearings, notification and public participation are delineated in the zoning ordinance.***